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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [NATO](#) [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: DEMARCHE REQUEST TO GAIN GOF SUPPORT FOR THE NATO
TRAINING MISSION-IRAQ

REF: USNATO 00144

Classified By: EUR Kurt Volker, Acting, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (U) This is an action request. Please see paragraph 10.

BACKGROUND

¶2. (SBU) Since 2004, the NATO Training Mission-Iraq (NTM-I) has provided a variety of training programs to Iraqi Security Forces to help establish a more secure environment in Iraq. Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki recently affirmed the value of this mission, and requested additional NATO training in a letter to NATO's Secretary General and during an April visit to NATO Headquarters (see ref A).

¶3. (SBU) NTM-I has trained in-country over 10,000 Iraqi Government security personnel in areas such as civil and military staff training, police training, and officer and non-commissioned officer (NCO) leadership training. These programs are based on a training, advising, and mentoring approach that allows Iraqi officers and NCOs, following their completion of an NTM-I program, to provide that training in turn to new Iraqi security personnel.

¶4. (SBU) The core focus of NTM-I's mission has centered on training officers at Iraq's military institutions and in their command and control centers. Recently, NATO has broadened its focus to include training programs for the Iraqi Navy, and Gendarmerie-type training for the Iraqi National Police (INP), led by Italy's Carabinieri. This two-year program started in October 2007, and has successfully trained three INP battalions. According to the Iraqi National Chief of Police, the first trained INP battalion has excelled in Baghdad and performed well above the level of the local police during militia clearing operations in Basra.

¶5. (SBU) NATO's training mission in Iraq also coordinates donations of equipment for Iraqi Government security personnel from a number of Allies. Since 2004, NATO has coordinated over \$170 million worth of donations to Iraq.

¶6. (C) Currently at NATO, the PCG is discussing the out-of-cycle mission review for NTM-I, before passing their recommendations to the North Atlantic Council (NAC) for final approval. The review is based on the Supreme Allied Commander's assessment of the mission and the NATO Military Committee's recommendations. As a consensus body, NATO needs all Allies to agree on each new training program proposed in the out-of-cycle mission review.

PM MALIKI REQUESTS MORE FROM NATO

¶7. (C) PM Maliki's Jan 29 letter to NATO's Secretary General praised NATO's ongoing mission and requested NATO to not only continue the mission, but also enhance the mission in specific areas such as border security and specialized police skills. These requests were highlighted in the NATO Bucharest Summit Declaration and then stressed again by PM Maliki in front of the NAC in Brussels (see ref A).

GOF'S POSITION ON NTM-I

¶8. (C) The GOF's support of NTM-I at NATO meetings has been lukewarm. During PM Maliki's visit to NATO HQ, the French were generally supportive of NTM-I, but sought to tie future NTM-I training activities to those already approved in the Mission OPLAN, a subtle way to rehash old procedural battles at NATO HQ and an attempt to limit new training missions (see ref A).

¶9. (C) In NATO Policy Coordination Group (PCG) meetings, France has indicated that it may not support additional, expanded training programs, e.g., police and border security training, because it believes that this training is not within the current limits of the OPLAN. GOF's tepid support for NTM-I at NATO is not in line with the positive remarks and declared willingness to do more to support Iraq by both President Sarkozy and FM Kouchner. Additional police and border security training are key programs that fall within the scope of NTM-I's Operation Plan (OPLAN), support the Alliance's political objective of supporting the Maliki government, and contribute to the Alliance's Military End-State of a self-sustaining Iraq Security Force.

ACTION REQUEST

¶10. (C-REL France) Drawing also on the above, Post is requested to pursue the following objectives with senior Elysee and MFA officials:

-- Stress to the GOF that Allied leaders committed at the Bucharest Summit to "favorably consider the Government of Iraq's request to enhance the NATO Training Mission-Iraq (NTM-I) mission in areas such as Navy and Air Force leadership training, police, and border security" among other areas that are specifically stated in the Summit Declaration;

-- Urge GOF officials to support the expansion of NTM-I during the periodic mission review (PMR) process currently underway at NATO HQ, per the Summit agreement noted above, and fully in line with the direct request for expanded training from Iraqi Prime Minister Al-Maliki, as noted in para 7;

-- Note that President Sarkozy has publicly stated that France is seeking ways to increase stability in the country as a first step toward full political reconciliation. Also note that Foreign Minister Kouchner, during his recent visit to Iraq, recognized that the security situation in Iraq is improving - Kouchner congratulated General Petraeus on the "spectacular" progress - and said that France wants to become more involved in Iraq. Support for NTM-I is consistent with international efforts to increase Iraqi stability and to build political reconciliation;

-- Inform GOF officials that other Allies are willing to enhance the NTM-I mission, specifically with police and border security training in response to the requests of PM Maliki and the Government of Iraq, but cannot move forward until a final decision is reached under the current NTM-I PMR. For example, Italy presently has almost 70 troops and Carabinieri serving in NTM-I and is considering additional personnel to support the enhanced NTM-I mission;

-- Explain to GOF officials, if necessary, that anything less

than full support for PM Maliki's direct request for additional training not only sends a negative political message to the PM and the Iraqi people, but also falls short of the Alliance's agreed to objective of developing the requisite security structures to stand up a democratic Iraqi government.

REPORTING AND POINT OF CONTACT

¶11. (U) Washington would appreciate a readout of Post's demarche as soon as possible in anticipation of NATO meetings on this topic on June 16. Please contact EUR/RPM Chris Davy at DavyRC@state.sgov.gov or 202-647-2127 for additional information.

RICE